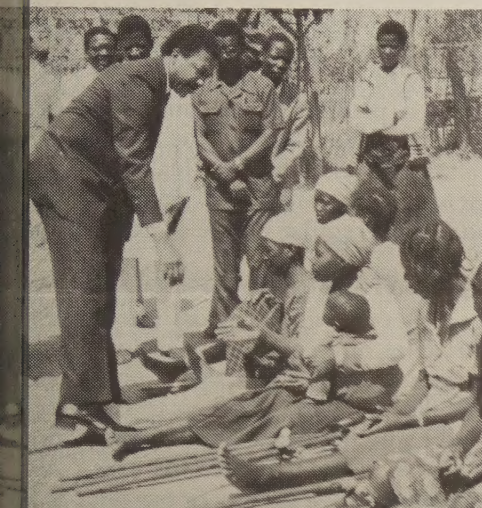


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ECRJ Executive Director Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., visits amputees in Huambo, Angola.

ECRJ's Angola Team Sees Medical Crisis

With a June cease-fire that never really took effect, Angola faces a medical catastrophe, says a fact-finding team of physicians that visited that African nation in Aug., sponsored by the UCC Commission for Racial Justice.

Delegation leader Adewale Troutman, city medical director of Newark, NJ, says the crisis is worsened by the gradual pull-out of 450 Cuban doctors, which will leave only 250 Angolan physicians to serve a country of 9 million people.

In short supply are orthopedic surgeons, who because of the 14-year civil war face a case load of some 54,000 amputees. Medical personnel are almost non-existent in rural areas, he says.

ECRJ executive director Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., who accompanied the team, says rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, whose UNITA organization has been fighting Angola's government with help from South Africa and the U.S., has violated the truce. Dr. Chavis, who witnessed a night bombardment, says a State Department official admitted the U.S. was still supplying land mines to UNITA.

Craigville Abortion Views Vary

Craigville Theological Colloquy participants on Cape Cod in Aug. heard three selected UCC views on abortion and freedom of choice.

Robin Fox, Sellersville, PA, a registered nurse who heads UCC Friends for Life, took what was the minority position at Craigville, stressing the fetus' "personhood" and "rights." Noting a 1987 Synod vote that spoke of a child's right to nutrition, even before birth, she said: "How can we . . . simultaneously encourage the premature removal of the fetus from its source of nourishment, the womb?"

The majority, far from encouraging abortion, was closer to the views of Lloyd Steffen, philosophy and religion professor and campus minister at Northland College, Ashland, WI; and Elinor Lockwood Yeo, social work and public policy director at Boston's City Mission Society.

Dr. Steffen favored preserving a healthy conflict between two "moral presumptions," life and freedom. Killing

a fetus is a tragic solution to the conflict, he said, but so is "the denial of the freedom to choose when it cannot be shown that the fetus, at least in the first stage of pregnancy, is a person and entitled to claim an irrefutable right to life."

Ms. Yeo, a former women's clinic and university counselor, said: "Very few women make the abortion decision easily, and virtually none are happy about it." Even the youngest can and do weigh "the claims of developing fetal life against their own needs as a living person and the claims of other family members."

Colloquy papers, including a "witness statement" agreeing on moral principles and the need for church action, are \$5 from Craigville Conference Center, Craigville, MA 02636.

Pro-Choice Program Starts

A UCC team will "mobilize" support for women's freedom of choice in matters of pregnancy and abortion. See p. 3.

Sexuality Important Subject in Seminary

Because church members often come to pastors with issues related to human sexuality, UCC-related seminaries are using various approaches to equip future ministers to deal with the topic.

Pastors counsel parishioners on issues ranging from sex and the adolescent to problem pregnancies to sexual abuse, says James Nelson, Christian Ethics professor at United Theological Seminary, Minneapolis. All United students take a six-day workshop on feelings, facts and beliefs about sexuality. "The goal is for them to be more comfortable with the topic in the parish," Dr. Nelson says.

Some professors are creating their own curricula, says Karen Lebacqz, professor of Christian ethics at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA. "For example, little has been written from a Christian perspective on the sexuality of

those who are single and divorced, so we're putting together our own material about this and other issues," Dr. Lebacqz says. She chairs a professional ethics group that did a study on intimacy in the parish. Results will appear in curricula to be made available to seminaries.

At Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, "courses such as 'Anger, Guilt and Depression' discuss the part sexuality plays in our emotions," says dean John Bracke. "And our Bible classes deal with the role of sexuality in the scriptures. We've also held forums on homosexuality and the church."

Churches are increasingly open about discussing sexual abuse, says Lancaster (PA) Theological Seminary president Peter Schmiechen. He says sexual abuse was a one-week theme of Lancaster's daily worship services.

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Stewardship: Be Not Anxious

By Sharon Solt Joseph

I want to believe that churches should not have to have stewardship campaigns each year. I want to believe that our faith informs us in such a way that we joyfully take initiative to give of our gifts (and that includes time and talent, as well as income) so that our churches can spend energy on missions instead of stewardship campaigns. I want to believe these things, but I know that they are far from reality.

Do you know that one of the most common words associated with stewardship campaigns is "dread?"

Part of my work with *United Church News* is to scan the 1,000 local church newsletters we get. At this time of year I read a lot about churches asking for money. And how do many of the letters from pastors and trustees and stewardship chairpersons begin? With variations of "I dread stewardship campaigns . . ." or "We dread asking for money . . ." Common runner-up words and phrases include "beg," "plead," "serious challenge," "that time of year again."

What makes me uneasy about these church campaigns is their abruptness. They are annual once-and-done, glad-it's-over chores. At best they remind people of their financial responsibilities to their church; at worst they make people feel guilty for not giving enough. In between are churches that point out overdue bills (one church even printed the bills in its newsletter), fallen giving (can't meet the budget), imminent problems (the roof will fall in) or that they do this only once a year. I empathize with those who try to be cute

(one suggested that members imagine that their income was 100 times their pledge).

These problems are all realities----ongoing realities in the life of the church. But it seems to me that stewardship should be one, too. What I want to know is the best way to live out stewardship the year round. And I want to know if we can do without a "Stewardship Sunday."

In the 1988 issue of the UCC's *Facts*, the Stewardship Council acknowledges that "many persons still reduce stewardship to the annual financial drive in their congregation." The report goes on to say that stewardship "is a way of being in the world, a way of relating to persons, vocation and society."

That's the ideal. And many of the church newsletters I read reflect that ideal in church programs and ministries held throughout the year. But there is this matter of the budget. How can churches deal with shortfalls and windfalls, leaky pipes and unexpected mission expenses along with the expected salaries, building maintenance and other regular budget items, without using the word "dread"?

I hope to be leaving the 1,000 newsletters behind soon to go back into parish ministry. There I will be thrust into the real world of working with trustees and others to develop annual financial campaigns for the church. Before the church's next campaign, I think I would like to ask the planners to study with me Matthew 6:25-33. I'd like to paraphrase Jesus' loving words for them: "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your church budget, how you shall feed the hungry or pay your bills, nor about your members, how much they will give."

Sharon Solt Joseph, a UCC minister living in New York City, is editorial assistant for United Church News.

Priorities Report

Evangelism and Membership Growth

First Congregational UCC, La Crosse, WI, has its new members "sponsor" new people for six months. Guidelines for the sponsors are few. They are to deliver new-member packets personally and make some other kind of contact---by phoning the new members, meeting them at church or inviting them over.

Integrity of Creation, Justice & Peace

The Indiana-Kentucky Conference in June passed a resolution calling for its

members to plant 2,000 trees in a year. People will plant trees outside homes, churches and places of business; the conference will keep a tally and give tips on kinds of trees to plant.

Education

Since 1976, the Eastern Ohio Association has held a week-long confirmation camp each summer for 7th- through 9th-graders in Ohio Conference churches. It is "experiential and hands-on" as the youth are led to experience the church year (Advent, Lent, Easter, Pentecost) in light of their own lives, says camp coordinator Betty Hauter, religious education coordinator at North Canton UCC. It is held at the conference's Pilgrim Hills campground and led by Ms. Hauter and ministers of participating churches.

The Homeless Poor

Four New York Conference churches have waged a three-year battle to press local government to do more for homeless people. Scarsdale Congregational UCC, Ridgeview Congregational UCC, Church in the Highlands and Chatter-

ton Hill UCC are among some 30 churches and synagogues in the White Plains area that formed SHORE (Sheltering the Homeless is Our Responsibility). Faced with government inaction, the congregations began taking turns as nightly hosts and provided van service to other shelters. Eventually a full-service program was started and its operation was turned over to another organization.

Job Opportunities

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is sought by the UCC Council for American Indian Ministry, Minneapolis. Applications and nominations accepted until Oct. 16 at CAIM, 122 W. Franklin, Suite 304, Minneapolis, MN 55404; 612-870-3679.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER is sought by UCC-related Elon Homes for Children, headquartered in Elon College, NC, with three campuses in North Carolina and Virginia. Send letter of interest and resume by Nov. 30 to Dale Bennett, Search Committee Chair, 5103 Montevista Ct., Greensboro, NC 27407.

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Papers Study Pastor-Couples

co-ministry can help change the church, says Nancy B. Rohde in a paper on wife-husband co-pastorates, published in the summer 1989 issue of *The Chicago Theological Seminary Register*. She reports that some 100 clergy couples are now serving local UCC churches.

"Theologically, co-ministry is an attempt to live out a vision of partnership in the new creation in this day and time," writes Ms. Rohde, co-pastor (with her husband) of First Congregational UCC, Ypsilanti, MI. She adds, "it challenges each person to risk letting go of many old ideas and expectations."

Ms. Rohde says some of the clergy couples she interviewed believed the co-pastorate left their parishioners with a better understanding of equality and encouraged them in "living out inclusive language in deed as well as word."

She cites a 1988 study by UCC pastor Peter Sawtell of Denver, which describes co-ministry as an entry-level option often

chosen for philosophical reasons then left behind for financial and parenting reasons. Nonetheless, increasing numbers of couples are taking co-pastorates.

Her paper also says the health of the couple's "family system" and that of the congregation are connected. A healthy system's values and boundaries are clear and flexible and its communication "is open and listening," she says. In a dysfunctional system, "people interact by manipulating [and] act out certain roles and false selves which the system needs to maintain itself."

Ms. Rohde says the church may soon shift from a management and hierarchical model of ministry to one of greater collegiality as "women in ministry and clergy work hard to explore and articulate such change," she says.

Order the papers for \$2.50 each from Ms. Rohde, P.O. Box 413, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, and Mr. Sawtell, 1650 S. Franklin, Denver, CO 80210.

Mission Changes Announced

The UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have strengthened their own partnership and their ties with partners overseas under two new world mission arrangements.

UC Board for World Ministries and the Disciples' Division of Overseas Ministries this summer started a common ministry for Latin America and the Caribbean. David Vargas, executive secretary of the new common ministry, comes from the Disciples staff; his associate, Carmen Alicia Nebot, comes from UCBWM. They will report to a new Commission on Common Ministry, made up of UCBWM and DOM board members. He will keep his office in Indianapolis; she will keep hers in New York City.

This differs from existing UCC-Disciples

principles joint arrangements in the Southern Asia and Middle East offices, in which Eric Gass and Dale Bishop are regional secretaries for both churches. Those are cases of "one staff person administering the policies of two boards," says Daniel Romero, general secretary of the mission program unit of UCBWM.

In the second new arrangement, requested by the Middle East Council of Churches, Dr. Bishop will work in Cyprus for the MECC for four months each year, starting in 1990. Calling it "an expression of our increasing closeness to the MECC," he says he will work on issues related to the mission activities of U.S. churches in the region and help U.S. churches better understand the Middle East council's witness.

Groups Create 'Justice Advocacy Forum'

The Justice Advocacy Forum, a new coalition of UCC "recognized groups" and organizations working on social justice issues, had its first meeting during General Synod 17 this year.

The Forum, organized by UCC Christians for Justice Action, is designed to "help UCC groups concerned about social and racial justice to provide support and information to each other," says CJA staff consultant James Smucker.

The Forum plans to meet yearly, Mr.

Smucker says. Ten UCC organizations have joined the group.

Officers Still in New York

The UCC headquarters remain in New York City this month as president Paul H. Sherry and treasurer Doris R. Powell join secretary Carol Joyce Brun at 105 Madison Ave. Those three, and thus the headquarters, will move to Cleveland in Jan., when offices likely will be ready.

UC Scene



Drawing by

Bryan Rupp, age 7½

Trinity Church, Telford

The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference has published a daily prayer guide for Pentecost, with prayers of local church members and art by children in the conference. Cost is \$1. Contact the conference, Box 400, Collegeville, PA 19426.

Mobilization Opens With Nov. 12 March

In response to the Supreme Court's summer decision in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, an executive staff team has been formed to coordinate a UCC abortion mobilization campaign.

The team will develop strategies to address the "very real threat to religious liberty and personal freedom posed by this decision," says team convener Marilyn Breitling, executive director of the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society. The other team members are Yvonne V. Delk, executive director, Office for Church in Society, and Charles Shelby Rooks, executive vice-president, UC Board for Homeland Ministries.

The team is urging UCC people to take part in a Nov. 12 march in Washington, DC, part of the National Organization for Women's "Freedom Campaign for Women's Lives." Contact Faith Evans, OCIS, 110 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002; 202-543-1517.

Also, Ms. Breitling says, "we'll assist UCC conference staffs as they work to preserve the right to reproductive freedom in their states. Working with the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, we'll provide information on legislation and resources."

SEND NEWS STORIES, PHOTOS and OPPOSING VIEWS of 100 words or less to stands taken in a particular article to KYP, Office of Communication, UCC, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Last E&R Pension Funds are Merged Into PB Annuity Fund

The last remaining pension funds of UCC predecessors, the Evangelical Synod Fund and the Reformed Sustentation Fund, have been merged into the Annuity Fund administered by The Pension Boards. The mergers will increase benefits to beneficiaries of the older funds and eliminate the need for Our Church's Wider Mission subsidies which the two funds had relied upon to keep up with distributions.

'Yearbook' Reports Continued Mainline Membership Decline

A 10-year decline in mainline church membership continued in 1987 (the latest reporting year) while Roman Catholicism and some conservative Protestant churches grew, says the National Council of Churches' "Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 1989." It also says average per-capita giving by full-communicant or confirmed church members in the U.S. rose 6.2%, while 1987 inflation was 4.4%.

Disciples Call for ANC, PLO Participation in Peace Processes

The recent Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Assembly called for inclusion of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the African National Congress in peace talks in their regions. While not seeking political recognition of the PLO, delegates did call the PLO an important voice for many Palestinians. And they noted that the U.N. and the Organization of African Unity recognize the ANC as representing "millions of South African Blacks and committed individuals of other races."

Immigration Snags Worsen for Missionaries in El Salvador

Immigration troubles are increasing for U.S. church workers in El Salvador, says Philip Anderson of Lutheran World Relief there. Daniel Dale and Nancy Jones, doing pastoral, administrative and social work for the Salvadoran Lutheran Synod with UCC and Disciples sponsorship, in Aug. were denied temporary residence visas; they got a Sept. extension on tourist visas. Anderson says the "unofficial" Salvadoran reason was "the Lutheran Church is involved in activities contrary to [El Salvador's] democratic process." U.S. church officials protested to the U.S. State Department.

Federal Court Ruling, Proposed Law Bring Refugees Hope

Two developments may let many refugees stay in the U.S. while their cases are reviewed. A July Federal District Court ruling in Texas says Immigration and Naturalization Service policies last spring to cut the flow of Central American asylum-seekers into the U.S. probably were illegal. Meantime, the proposed new Moakley Safe Haven bill in the House would create a temporary protected status. UC Board for World Ministries' Mary Kuenning urges letters to Congress supporting H.R. 45.

Bible Society Compiles Scriptures on Homelessness Theme

"God is Always With You" is a booklet of Scriptures compiled specifically for homeless people by the American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.



Promotions are under way for the UCC Hunger Action Fund. This year, congregations and conferences each may keep 20% of receipts for local projects; 60% goes to national offices to support relief and systemic change. Order promotional materials from United Church Resources, 1400 N. 7th St., St. Louis, MO 63106; 1-800-325-7061 (in Missouri, 314-621-1330).

JED Share's fall 1989 issue, "Focus on the Learning Environment," has articles on ministry with singles and children, concerns of the small church and tips on creative use of space. A year's subscription to the quarterly is \$8.80 (\$7.80 per year for 10 or more copies to one address); single copies are \$2.20. Contact United Church Press, 475 Riverside Dr., 10th floor, New York, NY 10115.

Thinking and Rethinking U.S. History, a manual for teachers and parents edited by historian and black studies director Gerald Horne and developed by the Council on Interracial Books for Children, takes a critical look at American history textbooks for children from elementary to high school levels. Quotes from standard texts spanning precolonial America to the turn of the 20th century are analyzed with an emphasis on social justice perspectives. The 389-page book also pinpoints issues and events where the part played by religious groups isn't mentioned and should be. Includes handouts, lesson plans and supplementary reading lists to help students develop critical thinking and apply it to textbooks and the events they describe. \$15.95 plus 10% shipping and handling from CIBC, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023; 212-757-5339.

Upcoming Event

A workshop, "Healing of Body, Mind, Soul," will be held at Kirkridge Retreat Center Nov. 10-16. The cost, \$575 (\$300 must be prepaid), covers room, board and tuition. Contact Kirkridge, Bangor, PA 18013; 215-588-1793.

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